



# Chinese Medicine Council of New Zealand

## Statement on the use of titles

### Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to assist tangata whai ora (person/s seeking health) to make informed choices and to avoid confusion in relation to titles used by registered Chinese Medicine (CM) practitioners. Clarity on the use of the titles for CM practitioners is essential to avoid misunderstandings about the qualifications and registration status of persons using such titles.

### New Zealand Law

In New Zealand titles of regulated health practitioners are protected by the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act). Section 7 HPCA Act states:

#### ***An unqualified person must not claim to be a health practitioner***

*(1) A person may only use names, words, titles, initials, abbreviations, or descriptions stating or implying that the person is a health practitioner of a particular kind if the person is registered, and is qualified to be registered, as a health practitioner of that kind.*

*(2) No person may claim to be practising a profession as a health practitioner of a particular kind or state or do anything that is calculated to suggest that the person practises or is willing to practise a profession as a health practitioner of that kind unless the person— (a) is a health practitioner of that kind; and (b) holds a current practising certificate as a health practitioner of that kind.*

*(3) Every person commits an offence punishable on summary conviction by a fine not exceeding \$10,000 who contravenes this section.*

### Titles regulated by the Chinese Medicine Council of New Zealand

- Chinese medicine practitioner
- Acupuncturist
- Chinese herbal medicine practitioner
- Chinese massage practitioner
- Tuina practitioner
- Chinese medicine specialist

The above stated titles are prescribed scopes of practice within Chinese Medicine pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (“HPCA Act”) and come into effect on 29 May 2023.

In accordance with section 7 of the HPCA Act, a person may only use names, words, titles, initials, abbreviations, or descriptions stating or implying that the person is a health practitioner of a particular kind if the person is registered [with the Council], and is qualified to be registered, as a health practitioner of that kind.

What this means is that no one may use names, words, titles, initials, abbreviations, or descriptions stating or implying that they are a Chinese medicine practitioner, Acupuncturist, Chinese herbal medicine practitioner, Chinese massage (tuina) practitioner, or Chinese medicine specialist unless they are registered with the Council and are qualified to be registered as a health practitioner of that kind.

To do so would be a breach of the HPCA Act and they could face prosecution by the Ministry of Health.

### Chinese medicine specialist

Specialist registration is an additional registration held in conjunction with another CM scope. It recognises CM practitioners with Council approved post-graduate qualifications, or clinical expertise, in a specific practice area recognised as a specialty area by the Council. A practitioner registered in the specialist scope of practice will have their recognised specialty area(s) recorded in their scope of practice (e.g., “Chinese Medicine Practitioner – Specialist (women’s health)”).

No one may use names, words, titles, initials, abbreviations, or descriptions stating or implying that they are a Chinese medicine specialist unless they are registered with the Council in that scope of practice, and are qualified to be registered, as a Chinese medicine specialist of that kind.

The Council has currently recognised the following specialist areas of Chinese medicine practice, this list is subject to change:

- women’s health;
- mental health;
- mental health and addiction;
- paediatrics;
- dermatology;
- musculoskeletal;
- pain;
- neurology;
- oncology;
- education;
- sports medicine;
- internal medicine; and
- research.

### Related resources

Notice of Scopes Practice (Chinese Medicine) and Related Qualifications. [NZ Government Gazette](#)

*Issued: May 2023. This statement is scheduled for review in 2028. Legislative changes may make this statement obsolete before this review date.*

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